

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A portable terminal comprising:
a storage for storing programs and symbols linked to the programs;
a display for displaying the operation state of a program when the program is invoked;
5 a user interface for sensing an external contact; and
a controller for detecting a figure represented by a signal sensed at the user interface
according to a path in which the external contact is made and, in the presence of a symbol
matching the figure, invoking a program corresponding to the symbol from the storage.
2. The portable terminal of claim 1, wherein the symbols are mapped to the
10 appellations of the programs in a program execution table.
3. The portable terminal of claim 2, wherein the storage further comprises a
plurality of program execution tables.
4. The portable terminal of claim 3, wherein the symbols listed in the program
execution tables are user-defined.
- 15 5. The portable terminal of claim 1, wherein the user interface is a touch pad.
6. The portable terminal of claim 1, wherein the user interface is a touch screen.
7. The portable terminal of claim 1, wherein the user interface is a membrane
coated on keys for key input, for sensing the external contact.
8. The portable terminal of claim 1, wherein the display displays the operation
20 state of a program invoked by the controller, and the controller controls the display to display a

symbol linked to the program for a predetermined time and then invokes the program.

9. The portable terminal of claim 1, wherein upon receipt of a sign command represented by a symbol linked to a different program from the user interface during an ongoing program, the controller stores information about the operation state of the ongoing program and
5 data generated from the ongoing program in the storage and runs the different program.

10. The portable terminal of claim 1, wherein the controller determines whether the figure is within a predetermined matching range of the symbol to check whether the figure matches the symbol.

11. A program invoking method in a portable terminal, comprising the steps of:
10 (a) determining whether an external contact has been sensed;
(b) detecting a figure represented by a sensed signal upon sensing the external contact according to a path in which the external contact is made;
(c) comparing the figure with symbols linked to stored programs; and
(d) invoking a program corresponding to a symbol from the storage if the symbol
15 matches the figure.

12. The program invoking method of claim 11, wherein the symbols are mapped to the appellations of the programs in a program execution table.

13. The program invoking method of claim 12, wherein the symbols are listed in a plurality of program execution tables.

20 14. The program invoking method of claim 13, wherein the symbols listed in the program execution tables are user-defined.

15. The program invoking method of claim 11, further comprising the step of, upon receipt of a sign command represented by a symbol linked to a different program from the user interface during the ongoing program in step (d), storing information about the operation state of the ongoing program and data generated from the ongoing program in the storage and
5 invoking the different program.

16. The program invoking method of claim 11, wherein it is determined whether the figure falls within a predetermined matching range of the symbol in step (c).

17. The program invoking method of claim 11, further comprising the steps of storing the figure after step (d), and deleting the figure if no symbols match the figure.

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